

South Scituate Aug. 4
1839

My Dear Friend.

Thank you for sending me the sheets of your forthcoming book. They came to hand yesterday afternoon, when I was in the midst of my Sermon, so that I have not yet had time to read them all. I have got as far as the 63 page - and have read so much with high satisfaction.

It looks badly to see letters that were addressed to me (Confidentially) in print. I cannot wholly satisfy myself that it is right to deal with them. True - I am not, strictly speaking, bound to keep a secret, I never promised to keep. If a man confides to me an evil design which he is about to execute, he surely does not lay me under any obligation to withhold the knowledge of his intention from those who will suffer, if it be not averted. Still further, I did not mention to any one that I had received any letters from Mr. Torrey until after I heard a letter from him read to a full meeting of the Board of managers, in which he announced that he had written to me, among others, on the subject of the ^{the} proposed paper. Such a disclosure perhaps would have released

158

me from my obligation to keep the letters out
of sight - if such an obligation were imposed
by the word (Confidential). Still - as this
explanation does not accompany the letters -
there is at least an appearance of unfair-
ness which gives me pain. - If it be not
too late, I should on the whole prefer to
have the letters omitted - or to obtain permis-
sion from Mr Torrey to have them published.
While we are exposing their wrong doings, it
is especially becoming in us to do no wrong
ourselves, and better to avoid even the ap-
pearance of evil. -

You may think me squeamish - but I
am what I am - a weak brother perhaps,
but I hope a true one. -

Yours affectionately
Samuel J. May.

[Faint, illegible handwriting throughout the page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.]

[Handwritten notes or calculations, possibly a list or ledger, written vertically in the center of the page.]

[Handwritten signature or name, possibly "James J. [illegible]", located in the lower center of the page.]

Mrs M. W. Chapman
No 11 West Street.
Boston.

J. P. May
Engl & May
1839